

**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

A new title is proposed with a better definition of the invention.

Claim 1 has been amended to more precisely define the invention. The changes to claim 1 are supported by the present Specification. The step (b) in claim 1 is supported by description on page 8, lines 6 to 8 and on page 11, lines 2 to 7 of the Specification, and by EXAMPLES of the Specification.

Claims 1-4, 6 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Pfeiffer et al. (US 5,447,102) in view of Kossak (US 3,735,702). The rejection is based on the reasoning that

"With respect to claims 1 and 6, Pfeiffer et al. teaches a printing process for a printing press having a plate cylinder 11, a blanket cylinder 16, a dampening roller 19 and an inking roller 13, the process comprising the steps of mounting the printing plate material (D) on the plate cylinder, carrying out printing by supplying dampening water and printing ink to the plate (Pfeiffer et al., Fig. IA, 2 and col. 9, lines 32-44), washing the surface of the blanket cylinder (Pfeiffer et al., col. 10 lines 18 20), dismounting the printing plate and mounting the second

printing plate, i.e., replacing the printing plate (Pfeiffer et al., col. 11, lines 13-16) and carrying out printing with the new plate (Pfeiffer et al., col. 11, lines 34-59)."

Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's interpretation of the art as referred to above. In the above statements, the passage "the process comprising the steps of mounting the printing plate material (D) on the plate cylinder" is incorrect. In Fig. 1A, and col. 5, line 62 of Pfeiffer et al. Pfeiffer et al. discloses printing plate D, but not the printing plate material as required by the present invention as claimed in claim 1. That is, the Pfeiffer et al. printing plate D is quite different from the printing plate material as recited in claim 1. The printing plate material is a printing plate precursor for obtaining a printing plate (corresponding to the printing plate D of Pfeiffer et al.) having images to be printed onto sheets. The statement of rejection confuses the printing plate D with the printing plate material as claimed.

There is neither disclosure nor suggestion in Pfeiffer et al. of the printing plate material as claimed and a process mounting the printing plate material on a plate cylinder of a printing press. Further, there is no disclosure in Pfeiffer

et al. of the printing plate material as claimed comprising an image formation layer, the image formation layer at non-image portions being capable of being removed with a dampening water and printing ink. Herein, the printing plate material as claimed is a development-on-press type printing plate material comprising a layer capable of being removed with dampening water and printing ink on a printing press as defined on page 3, lines 13-16 of the present Specification. Furthermore, as described on page 5, lines 13-17 of the Specification, the process of the invention exhibits an advantageous effect of the invention that gives a stable and good developability on a press, when the development-on-press type printing plate material is employed. Pfeiffer et al. is silent about such an advantageous effect and does not otherwise teach a reason to make the present invention.

Kossak only teaches the steps of drying the washed surface cylinder.

In view of the above, the claimed invention would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art over Pfeiffer et al. in view of Kossak.

Withdrawal of the rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

In order to further demonstrate the unexpected results of the invention, additional comparative test were carried out. The results are shown in Table 7 in an executed DECLARATION attached hereto. Drying steps (0) and (1) are defined in the specification on page 68, last two paragraphs. As in Table 6, (page 72 of the specification) "Developability on a press" is the same parameter as "Initial printability" in Table 7 of the DECLARATION.

As is apparent from Table 7 of the DECLARATION, in the printing process in which the printing plate material as recited in claim 1 (printing plate precursor) is mounted on the plate cylinder of a printing press, and development is carried out on the plate cylinder to prepare a printing plate, the inventive printing process comprising drying step (1) provides greatly improved initial printability, compared with the comparative printing process comprising drying step (0) (in which no drying is carried out), while, in the printing process in which a printing plate (printing plate D corresponding to Pfeiffer et al.) is mounted on the plate cylinder of a printing press, the printing process comprising drying step (1) provides approximately the same result as the printing process comprising drying step (0). In the printing process of Pfeiffer et al, there

is no substantial difference in initial printability between a printing process comprising drying step (1) and a printing process comprising drying step (0). The results are unexpected to one of ordinary skill in the art, and it would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to attain the invention over Pfeiffer et al., which fails to disclose the printing process as claimed, in view of Kossak.

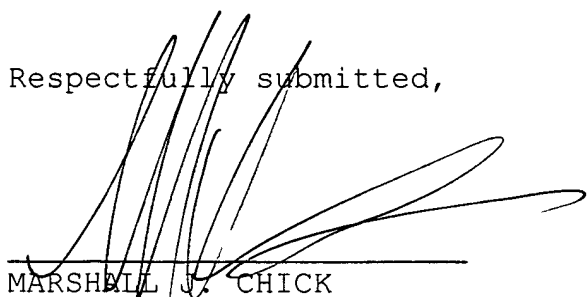
In view of the above, it is submitted that the present invention is not shown or suggested by the cited art. Withdrawal of the rejections and allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT**

An INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT is being filed concurrently herewith.

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